

update

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UNDP Seeks Funding for Crucial Rehabilitation Programme in Former Yugoslavia

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has launched an appeal to fund a crucial rehabilitation programme aimed at helping those displaced by the civil war in the former Yugoslavia rebuild their lives. The programme, which is being carried out in conjunction with the United Nations, involves infrastructure and social rehabilitation in areas where the violence has abated. An appeal for the US\$9.4 million needed to fund the programme was made at a donors conference in Geneva on 4 March.

UNDP's efforts are currently concentrated in the Okucani-Pakrac region of Croatia's Western Slavonia. This area, once ravaged by fighting between Serbs and Croats, has been declared a peace zone and is now under United Nations protection. Two years ago, as the front line moved back and forth across the region, hundreds of villages were emptied and destroyed. Two of the region's larger towns, Pakrac and Lipik, suffered particularly extensive damage.

A cease fire was declared in January 1992. When the demilitarization of the region began, under the auspices of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), many families displaced by the war expressed a desire to return home.

Under a UNDP-supported pilot project co-financed with a US\$1.1 million grant from the Austrian government, 2,500 displaced residents from 90 villages were allowed to return and begin rebuilding their communities. House trailers have been donated to provide temporary shelter for returnee families while they rebuild their homes. After they have done so, the trailers are passed on to other families.

Given the political situation, permanent resettlement for all of the returnees from the region can take place only with the full cooperation and involvement of UNPROFOR, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Croatian government and local Serb authorities. UNDP is helping to establish a joint development committee, comprised of local authorities, to foster cooperation in restoring electricity, water supply, transport, communications, destroyed physical infrastructure, and social and medical services.

Under another project, UNDP helped establish self-help and social-action groups aimed at improving inter-ethnic cooperation in the Okucani-Pakrac region. A number of community meetings, training programmes and services for women, the elderly and young

people have been established. This project also led to an assessment of the damage to the region's villages and the preparation of an economic development plan.

The rehabilitation programme aims to promote peace by re-establishing trust and normal relations between the previously warring ethnic groups. To further this effort, UNDP is seeking funding to expand the number of projects in the Okucani-Pakrac region, including the repair of a hospital and the construction of a flour mill and bakery. Socio-economic activities—including counselling services and income-generating projects—addressing the needs of the disabled, the elderly, women and young people, will be promoted as well.

UNDP also seeks funding for two projects operating in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro. A centre is being established to improve the capacity of women's organizations to address the needs of traumatized women and children. Services to be offered by this centre include medical assistance, group counselling and psycho-social help.

The other project would provide support for multi-ethnic social workers monitoring and distributing assistance to refugees in Mitrovica, Serbia and Niksic, Montenegro. It would help the social workers organize self-help and income generating activities, the re-integration of former soldiers, psychological counselling, and services for the elderly, the disabled, women and children.

All of these projects are carried out in conjunction with the local authorities, UNPROFOR, and other UN agencies, including the World Health Organization, UNHCR, the United Nations Children's Fund, and the World Food Programme.

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UNDP Supports Programme to Improve Development Cooperation in Indochina

The government of Thailand will help Cambodia, the Lao PDR and Vietnam make the transition to market-based economies. The Thai Government's offer to share its economic expertise was made at a UNDP-sponsored conference of aid coordinators held in Vientiane, Laos to endorse proposals for four UNDP-supported initiatives aimed at improving development cooperation among the Indochina countries.

At the conference, which convened 15 to 16 March, government representatives from all four countries agreed to meet this summer to discuss economic issues, including inflation management and aid mobilization.

In addition to fostering a socio-economic dialogue, the meeting endorsed regional cooperation in promoting air transportation safety, environmental protection, and the socio-economic development of ethnic groups living in highland areas. UNDP will provide US\$4 million in support of the four initiatives.

Mr. Ramanathan Natarajan, Chief of UNDP's South-East Asia Division, stressed the importance of inter-country cooperation for the development of the sub-region, saying, "Only such mutual cooperation and joint work in several common fields can forge, strengthen, and sustain long-term development of the region with its acknowledged common links in history, geography and culture."

Under the air transportation safety initiative, workshops will help improve the management capacity of senior and mid-level personnel, and levels of performance in search and rescue, aviation security, airworthiness and aeronautical information services.

Another initiative will encourage the sharing of experience to help the governments map out development strategies and possibly develop cross-border initiatives to tackle poverty and other concerns. There are more than 12 million ethnic minorities in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. Many of these people live in remote areas that cross national boundaries. NGOs and other development agencies active in this area will be included as partners in this programme.

The Indochina region boasts one of the richest concentrations of biodiversity in Asia, much of it ravaged by military conflict and unsustainable agriculture practises. In order to prevent further degradation, UNDP is supporting a biodiversity conservation and research programme to help the four countries strengthen management of national protected areas. The programme will also establish systems for inter-country information exchange.

UNDP to Support Information Exchange on Aid Coordination Management in Nine Latin American Countries

To help Latin American governments improve their ability to obtain and utilize international aid, UNDP will promote the sharing of information on aid management. Funded by UNDP's Special Unit for Technical Co-operation Among Developing Countries and conducted by the Agencia de Cooperacion Internacional, a study will explore aid management systems in nine countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua and Venezuela. By giving Latin American governments the opportunity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of development efforts in other countries of the region, each country can put its international aid to the best possible use.

UNDP Sponsors Workshop to Help African Governments Attract and Retain Talented Civil Servants

How can African governments attract, motivate, reward and retain the best civil servants? That is the topic of a UNDP-supported workshop to be held 26 to 30 April in Cotonou, Benin. Organized by UNDP's Management Development Programme (MDP), the workshop will bring together civil servants from Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritania, Rwanda and Tunisia.

Participants will work in small groups with observers from donor agencies and international institutions to find innovative solutions to one of the biggest problems facing African governments today: how to motivate and retain the most competent employees. The workshop is expected to help African governments identify key solutions and activities and map out country-specific action plans.

Over the last 10 years, as public debt soared in many African countries, a number of governments reduced expenditures by cutting the wages of civil service employees. This caused the remuneration of many government workers to fall below subsistence level. Consequently, some of Africa's most talented civil servants abandoned their jobs to join the private sector or simply leave the country. Those who stayed had to resort to other means to make ends meet.

The Benin meeting marks the second workshop on African Management Development and Innovation organized by the MDP. Following the recommendations of participants at the first workshop, held last November in Mozambique, the MDP is helping to set up a network of African managers, who will continue to share experiences after the workshops have ended.

UNDP Helps Uzbekistan Meet Humanitarian Needs

UNDP is helping the government of Uzbekistan develop programmes to alleviate the economic and social hardships faced by its 20 million people — half of whom are teenagers or children.

The devaluation of the ruble and the disruption of commerce between Uzbekistan and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States has taken its toll on the Uzbeki people. Prices have soared, resulting in a dramatic decline in living standards; earnings of about 37 per cent of the population have fallen below the poverty line.

The government's ability to cushion the adverse impact of these economic changes is constrained by an unfavourable demographic structure. Of Uzbekistan's 1990 population of 20.6 million, 51 percent was under 19 years of age, and thus entitled to a children's allowance under the country's social welfare programme. Another nine per cent was over the pensionable age of 55. Families living below the poverty line are also entitled to special social support. Today, social welfare programmes account for about two-thirds of the country's proposed budget for 1992-1993.

In the face of such problems, the Uzbeki government has had difficulty providing basic social services, such as health care. UNDP is assisting the government in evaluating emergency humanitarian needs, developing programmes aimed at providing care for infants and children, and supporting the quick disbursement of vaccines, drugs and other basic medical supplies and equipment. UNDP is also helping the government design and implement an economic reform programme in advance of a donors' conference to be held in May or June.

Approved Projects

(all projects subject to modification; sums quoted in US dollars)

Brazil — Forest fires are a major cause of natural ecosystem destruction, soil fertility loss, greenhouse gas emissions and socio-economic losses in Brazil. Over the last five years, some 30 million hectares of rainforest, savannah, and scrubland have been lost to fire.

In an effort to assess and control this problem, the government created the National System for Fire Prevention and Control in 1989. In 1991, it requested UNDP to strengthen national capacity to carry out fire prevention and control activities at the federal level. Consultancies have been provided in fire management, remote sensing, fire training and fire prevention. A system for fire monitoring through satellites has been established and provisions made for the training of personnel. The government has requested an extension of the project to increase training activities and provide the technical

assistance necessary to establish a National System for Wildfire and Burnings Prevention.

UNDP contribution: \$100,000. Government cost-sharing: \$4 million. Funds will provide for international and national consultants, training, computers and fire control equipment for training and demonstration activities. Government executed and implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture. (BRA/90/021)

Comoros — Private sector activities in this island country are hampered by a lack of natural resources and the relative isolation of the local economy from international trade. The lack of a supportive legal and commercial environment, coupled with a deep economic recession, have also hurt efforts to encourage local business activity. For these reasons, the government of Comoros has requested UNDP assistance to establish a project to support sustainable growth in the private sector.

The project aims to strengthen enterprise development, broaden the social base of entrepreneurship and alleviate the unemployment pressures caused by business deregulation. It will promote the role of women in the private sector through various training programmes. In addition, case studies and rehabilitation and development plans will be drawn up.

UNDP contribution: \$2.3 million. Funds will provide for a business administration specialist, an expert-maintenance engineer and a junior-expert business administrator. It will also provide national economists, an agro-economist, a legal expert and a trade specialist. Training, equipment and office furniture will also be given. Executed by the International Labour Organisation and implemented by the Ministry for Finance, Budget and Planning. (COI/91/003)

Kuwait — During seven months of occupation by Iraqi forces, Kuwait's economy suffered extensive damage. It is estimated that there was a 70 per cent decline in Kuwait's real gross domestic product from just before the invasion in August 1990 to the end of the occupation in late February 1991. The occupation also led to a mass exodus that reduced the population from about 2.14 million in 1990 to between 1.3 and 1.5 million at the end of 1991.

As a result of this demographic change, the government has seen its staff decline from about 250,000 to about 170,000—a 32 per cent workforce reduction that has made dealing with the country's economic crisis all the more daunting.

To make the employees that remain more productive, the government asked UNDP to assist in strengthening the capacity of the civil service to re-establish services to the population. The project will help the government identify problem areas and carry out training programmes to ensure management skills are improved.

Government cost-sharing: \$2.5 million. Funds will provide a resident adviser and a management information specialist. A sub-contract to carry out the bulk of the work will be given. Executed by UNDP's Office for Project Services and implemented by the Civil Service Commission. (KUW/93/001)

Lebanon — The reconstruction of Lebanon will require a public investment programme valued at \$4.5 billion over the next five years. The programme will be implemented in two phases: 1) a short-term emergency rehabilitation phase (1993-1996) to restore the operational capacity of the country's war-ravaged public infrastructure; and 2) a medium-term recovery phase (1996-1998).

To address the first phase, the government prepared a US\$2.25 billion National Emergency Reconstruction Programme, a broad-based multisectoral operation designed to overcome infrastructure bottlenecks, reduce social problems and lay the foundation for medium- and long-term recovery.

Massive amounts of technical cooperation will be required to help the government re-establish capacity in a public administration decimated by 16 years of civil strife. At the government's request, UNDP will provide support to build national capacity in the management of technical cooperation. The project will assist the government in creating an Institutional Rehabilitation and Technical Cooperation Division to plan, manage and monitor technical cooperation.

UNDP contribution: \$1.26 million. Funds will provide for international and national consultants in the design and establishment of the technical cooperation data base and the establishment of a network and development of technical cooperation procedures. It will also provide national experts in information management, sector specialties, and database management. Executed by Lebanon's Council of Development and Reconstruction (CDR) and implemented by UNDP's Office for Project Services and CDR. (LEB/92/013)

Interregional Project

Promoting and Enhancing the Application of Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries (1993-1996)

— UNDP, through its Special Unit for Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries (TCDC), has been entrusted with the lead role in promoting the use of technical cooperation in activities financed by the United Nations.

In February 1992, UNDP's Governing Council approved US\$15 million for the promotion of TCDC during the Fifth Programme Cycle (1992-1996). Out of this allocation, projects totalling US\$2.3 million were approved in 1992. The additional funds will be used to cover the four remaining years of the Fifth Cycle.

During the Fourth Cycle (1987-1991), the Special Unit for TCDC implemented four major types of activities: matching of needs and capacities; workshops; support to ad-hoc activities in addressing common problems; and the provision of data and information on capacities of developing countries through the TCDC Information Referral System. Most of these activities will continue in the Fifth Cycle. But more attention will be given to activities and projects that support studies and evaluations to enhance creative approaches to TCDC and disseminate information on successful experiences. In addition, demonstration and pilot projects will be undertaken to test new approaches and refine novel initiatives.

UNDP contribution: \$8.9 million. Executed by UNDP's OPS and implemented by governments and institutions of participating countries.

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Human Development